

Sports Turf Manager

FOR BETTER, SAFER SPORTS TURF. WINTER 2011. VOL. 24. NO. 4.

A University of Guelph Turfgrass Story

Article & Photos By Bill Clausen, Facility Manager, Athletics Department, University of Guelph

The University of Guelph expanded its artificial turf inventory three-fold this year adding two new lit soccer pitches and a half-sized field to its inventory. The University also installed state of the art Polytan Liga 265 Turf on the rugby pitch in 2010. The new fields were constructed on the site of the multipurpose practice fields located on the east side of campus near The Arboretum. The facility now features two full-sized lit artificial soccer fields, a half-sized artificial practice field and a full-sized natural grass rugby/football field. The west soccer pitches will have seating for roughly 450 spectators and the east for approximately 120.



Laying sod rolls on the new rugby field, November 2011.

Looking back, the main problem with the University of Guelph's sports fields was over-use causing such significant wear and tear that no amount of maintenance could keep them safe for play after a certain number of hours of use. University sports field use is between August 15 and November 30 each year. University of Guelph fields averaged between 45 and 60 hours of use each week during this time period. It was virtually impossible for the Grounds De-

partment to maintain turf during that time period. All that could be done was keep the fields closed from April to August and work diligently to ensure they were in as good condition as possible for the start of the fall playing season.

The secondary issue was the University's inability to host external clients on its sports fields. The Department of Athletics would receive numerous requests from local, provincial and occasionally, national sports organizations, for fields throughout

the year and the department could accommodate none of them.

Taking a step back even further, in 1971, the sports field inventory consisted of Alumni Stadium (lights), a rugby pitch (lights), soccer pitch (lights), field hockey pitch (lights), main softball diamond (lights), South Diamond, and two football-sized multipurpose fields. Student population was under 10,000 students. Varsity athletic programs consisted of men's football... >> cont. inside on page 16



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Rob Anthony, former NFL head groundskeeper, provides an in-depth perspective on the use of water to better maintain infill synthetic turf sports fields. The old myth that these fields are relatively maintenance-free no longer applies.

8 OTS 2012. Grow your knowledge by attending the province's top educational and networking annual event. We have outlined all the sports turf specific sessions on pages 8 & 11.

18 COST & SELECTION of natural turf fields. Determine your field type and then assemble the right team.